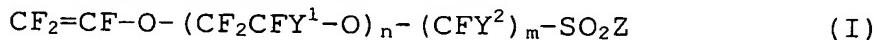


ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to a method of producing the fluoropolymer according to any one of Claims 5 1 to 3, by subjecting a fluoropolymer precursor containing acid/acid salt groups and having $-CF_2COOX$ groups at polymer chain terminals, in the formula X represents H, $NR^{11}R^{12}R^{13}R^{14}$ or $M^4_{1/L}$; R^{11} , R^{12} , R^{13} and R^{14} are the same or different and each represents H or an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 10 carbon atoms and M^4 represents a metal having a valence of L, said metal having a valence of L being a metal belonging to the group 1, 2, 4, 8, 11, 12 or 13 of the long-form periodic table, to heat treatment for the conversion of said $-CF_2COOX$ groups to $-CF_2H$ groups, X being as defined 15 above,

wherein said fluoropolymer precursor is one obtained by polymerizing a perhalovinyl ether derivative represented by the general formula (I):



20 wherein Y^1 represents F, Cl or a perfluoroalkyl group, n represents an integer of 0 to 3, the n atoms/groups of Y^1 are the same or different, Y^2 represents F or Cl, m represents an integer of 1 to 5, the m atoms of Y^2 are the same or different and Z represents F, Cl, Br, I, $-OM^5_{1/L}$ or 25 $-ONR^{15}R^{16}R^{17}R^{18}$; M^5 represents a metal having a valence of L and the metal having a valence of L is as defined above, and R^{15} , R^{16} , R^{17} and R^{18} are the same or different and each represents H or an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 carbon atoms,

30 when the group $-SO_2Z$ in the general formula (I) is not said acid/acid salt group but is a group convertible to such acid/acid salt group, said fluoropolymer precursor is one subjected to a conversion treatment, after the above-mentioned polymerization, for the conversion of said group 35 $-SO_2Z$ to the above-mentioned acid/acid salt group, and

said heat treatment comprises heating said fluoropolymer precursor at 120 to 400°C.